(a) whether it is a fact that an internal inquiry into the 1998 onion crisis has revealed involvement of certain NAFED officials in the scam;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what action has been taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) to (c) The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) has informed that their Vigilance Cell has conducted a preliminary enquiry in the onion purchases made during the year 1998 and the enquiry report is under examination. If charges are found proved against any official of NAFED, disciplinary action will be initiated under the Conduct, Disciplinary and Appeal Rules of the Federation.

Cyclone Affected People of Srikakulam District

1533. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Rs. 40 crores Central aid was sought by the Andhra Pradesh State Government for providing relief and rehabilitation measures to the cyclone affected people in Srikakulam district;

(b) if so, the assistance given so far; and

(c) if not, by when the assistance will be given?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The memorandum is under consideration in accordance with the established procedure.

Potato Seed Farm

1534. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the Regional Potato Farm, Mao, Manipur is supplying Potato seeds to the neighbouring States of North East Region;

(b) whether Government have no plan to upgrade the said farm to be a National Breeder Potato Seed Farm during the Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(c) if not, whether there is any Government plan to open a Potato breeder seed farm in the North East Region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) All the Research & Breeder Seed production aspects of Potato for the North Eastern Region are taken care of by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research through Central Potato Research Institute, Shimla and its Regional Stations at Shillong & Patna. As such Government of India has no plan to upgrade the Mao Farm to a National Breeder Seed Farm in the Ninth Five Year Plan.

(c) No, Sir.

Yield Per Acre of Land in the Country

1535. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the yield per acre of land in our country is about half of that in China;

(b) if so, what steps Government are going to take to increase productivity; and

(c) whether foodgrain production for 1998-99 was over 200 million tons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) Comparison between yield per acre of major crops like cereals, cotton show that yield rates of China are higher than that of India.

(b) To increase production and productivity of agricultural crops, the Government is implementing centrally sponsored Integrated Cereal Development Programmes in Rice/Wheat/Coarse Cereals Based Cropping System area, Accelerated Maize Development Prog-